

## VICTORIA FALLS.

Called "the Most Beautiful Gem of the Earth's Scenery."

The Zambesi river, carrying a huge volume of water two miles in width, as it reaches the western borders of Rhodesia precipitates itself into a cavernous gorge and thus traverses the northern plains of the country.

This great drop in the river has produced "the most beautiful gem of the earth's scenery," the Victoria falls. Almost twice as broad as Niagara and two and a half times as high, an immense mass of water rolls over its edge to precipitate itself in magnificent splendor 400 sheer feet into the narrow canyon below.

Undeterred, the Rhodesian engineers, without detracting from the natural beauty of the surroundings, threw across the canyon a splendid 650 foot cantilever bridge and thus opened the way to Tanganyika, to Uganda, to Cairo.

This bridge, the greatest railway engineering triumph of Africa, deserves more than passing notice. It consists of a central span weighing approximately 1,000 tons, 500 feet in length and 30 feet wide. The steel work is of rolled steel weighing 490 pounds to the cubic foot. The end posts of the bridge are over 100 feet long. The pull on the anchorage apparatus is about 400 tons.

The contract for the construction was obtained by an English firm of bridge builders—the contract time fifty-five weeks. The work of erection was carried on from both banks, the material being taken across the river by means of an aerial electric railway. The electrical conveyor of this cable way was capable of dealing with a ten ton load at a lifting speed of twenty feet per minute and a traversing speed of 300 feet a minute.

An initial difficulty in the construction of the bridge was the securing of a firm foundation, and owing to the crumbling nature of the bank a much greater quantity of concrete was necessary than estimated.

The construction was happily unattended by accidents of a serious nature, though a few slight accidents to body work and the replacing from England of one piece of steel work were recorded. In spite of these delays the bridge was linked up at 7 a. m. on April 1, 1905, or exactly forty-eight hours earlier than had been estimated a year before.—Lieutenant Colonel Sir Percy Girouard in Scribner's.

## Cured Him.

"I wish my husband would not stay out at night," said the little woman.

"Cure him," said her companion, "as a woman I know cured her husband, who used to stay out every night. One night he came in very late, or, rather, very early, about 3 o'clock in the morning. He came home very quietly. In fact, he took off his shoes on the front doorstep. Then he unlocked the door and went cautiously and slowly upstairs on tiptoe, holding his breath. But light was streaming through the keyhole of the door of the bedroom. With a sigh, he paused. Then he opened the door and entered. His wife stood by the bureau fully dressed.

"I didn't expect you'd be sitting up for me, my dear," he said.

"I haven't been," she said. "I just came in myself."

## Persian Dramatics.

A traveler, speaking of some of the oddities of Persian customs when viewed with occidental eyes, said:

"Depending as we do upon illusion and scenic effects in our theaters, the presentation of a Persian play by native performers strikes the westerner as little short of ridiculous, the extreme solemnity of all concerned making the appeal to hilarity all the stronger. In one of their favorite miracle plays the prophet is supposed to ascend to heaven, and this dramatic incident is accomplished by the very simple expedient of drawing him up from the stage and out of sight with a block and tackle. The tackle is attached to his belt by an attendant in plain view of the audience. So strong, however, is the imaginative power in the oriental that many of the onlookers will be observed weeping openly."—Harper's Weekly.

## Marriage.

"What I want," said the young man, "is to get married and have a peaceful quiet home."

"Well," said Farmer Cornstossel, "sometimes it works that way, and then again sometimes it's like joining a debating society."—Washington Star.

## A Cautious Lover.

A correspondent of the London Globe tells of a gilded youth who left instructions at a jeweler's shop for the inscription of an engagement ring he had just bought. He wanted it inscribed, "From Bertie to Maud." As he left he turned back and added as an after thought, "I shouldn't—ah—cut 'Maud' too deep, don't you know."

## Close.

She—Do you know I've induced my husband to give up cigars? He—Is that so? Well, I've known him for seven years, and I never saw him give up one.—Illustrated News.

## THE GOORALS OF POLAND.

Honest, Hospitable and Brave, but Obstinate and Quarrelsome.

The character of the goorals has nothing in common with the humble peasants of the low country. In their good qualities and faults they rather resemble the proud noblemen of Poland. They are vivacious, honest, hospitable and full of pride, bravery and chivalry, on which one may always count. But their defects are grave. Obstinate and quarrelsome lead them often to bloody fights, the lack of thrift is frequent among them and superstitions haunt them at every step. They love nature and in their songs praise their gigantic peaks, spruce forests and the clouds and rain. They build their houses facing Tatra, which they constantly observe and consult about weather conditions. A gooral cannot live without his mountains, and if he sometimes leaves them homesickness will soon bring him back.

They are very religious, but their Christian faith is mixed with old superstitions, and the Roman Catholic rites are mingled with weird, often very picturesque, usages which have their origin in the old Slavonic paganism. So, for instance, on St. John's night Sobotka is celebrated by burning bonfires on fields and hills and by dancing, a festivity which in pagan times was held on the summer solstice in honor of Svatovit, the god of sun, fire and love.

On Easter holidays from every house various kinds of food are brought into the church to be blessed by the priest, or the priest, accompanied by a sexton, goes to the house, where on a long, white covered table cake, eggs and venison await his blessing. This is called swiakoce. The table remains covered with food for a week to await all friends of the house that may come.

The Polish tongue among the mountaineers has pleasant, soft intonations, and their dialect resembles the old Polish of the fifteenth or sixteenth century. The picturesque and practical costume of the goorals consists of a coarse linen shirt fastened with a brass brooch; a serdak, which is a sleeveless sheepskin jacket of a reddish color, richly decorated with applique ornaments of colored leather and silk embroidery and lined with fur; tight fitting trousers of coarse, whitish, home-made woolen cloth, and a cloak called tsuha, worn usually over one shoulder. A black felt hat shaped like a mushroom and soft leather sandals (perpce) complete a costume that weighs from thirty-five to thirty-eight pounds, but is a good protection against cold and the rain which in these regions is frequent, for twenty days in a month are at least drizzly.—W. T. Benda in Century.

## Learning.

Learning bath its infancy, when it is almost childish; then its youth, when luxurious and juvenile; then its strength of years, when solid, and, lastly, its old age, when dry and exhausted.—Bacon.

## Made a Bad Job of It.

Mr. Bacon—That Mr. Crossley, who called last evening is a self made man. Mrs. Bacon—Too bad he couldn't have made himself a little more agreeable.

## Not Much Done.

Simkins—Old Skinner is considered pretty well to do, isn't he? Timkins—Yes; also pretty hard to do.—Chicago News.

## Sure on One Point.

"Out late last night? What time did the clock say when you got in?" "I don't remember what the clock said, but I will never forget what my wife said!"



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